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Kindly add the following new claims 18-37.

-- 18. An exterior sheathing element comprising:
a main body having lateral sides;
a first edge portion on said main body between said lateral sides, said first edge portion including an innerface channel;
a second edge portion on said main body between said lateral sides and opposite said first edge portion, said second edge portion including an outerface channel; and
a mounting tab projecting from said second end portion so as to be substantially co-planar with respect to said main body; and
an overlapping section of said second end portion located near at least one of said lateral sides of said main body, said overlapping section being free of said mounting tab and being adapted to be overlapped with a side of an adjoining second sheathing element so that said first edge portion and said second edge portion of the sheathing element engage the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the adjoining second sheathing element, respectively.

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19. The sheathing element of claim 18, wherein said second edge portion is adapted such that a first edge portion of an adjoining third sheathing element can engage at least one of said second edge portion of the sheathing element and the second edge portion of the adjoining second sheathing element.

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20. The sheathing element of claim 18, wherein said lateral sides of said main body comprise an upper side and a lower side, wherein said upper side and said lower side are defined with respect to a position after the sheathing element has been overlapped with the adjoining second sheathing element, said overlapping section being located at said upper side of said main body.

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21. The sheathing element of claim 20, wherein said mounting tab includes a support batten extending in a longitudinal direction with respect to said main body, said support batten being formed as a channel.

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22. The sheathing element of claim 18, wherein said mounting tab includes a support batten extending in a longitudinal direction with respect to said main body, said support batten being formed as a channel.

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23. A method of sheathing an exterior of a structure using a plurality of the sheathing elements of claim 18, said method comprising:

positioning a first sheathing element on a support structure;

overlaying a second sheathing element onto and adjacent to the first sheathing element so that a side of the second sheathing element overlaps an adjoining side of the first sheathing element;

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engaging the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, respectively, by inserting a side section of the first edge portion of the first sheathing element into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the second sheathing element, and by inserting a side section of the second edge portion of the second sheathing element into the outerface channel of the second edge portion of the first sheathing element;

positioning a third sheathing element adjacent to the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element so that the first edge portion of the third sheathing element is engaged over an overlapping section of the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element, whereat the second end portion of the first sheathing element engages the second end portion of the second sheathing element, by inserting the overlapping section into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the third sheathing element;

fixing the first sheathing element, the second sheathing element, and the third sheathing element to the support structure by using a mounting device to attach the mounting tab of each sheathing element to the support structure; and

repeating said positioning of the first sheathing element, said overlaying of the second sheathing element, said engaging of the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, said positioning of the third sheathing element, and said fixing of the first sheathing element as necessary so as to sheath the support structure.

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24. An exterior sheathing element comprising:

a substantially planar main body having lateral sides and having ribs extending substantially parallel to said lateral sides, said ribs being located adjacent to one of said lateral sides of said main body;

a first edge portion on said main body between said lateral sides, said first edge portion including an innerface channel;

a second edge portion on said main body between said lateral sides and opposite said first edge portion, said second edge portion including an outerface channel; and

a mounting tab projecting from said second end portion so as to be substantially co-planar with respect to said main body; and

an overlapping section of said second end portion located near at least one of said lateral sides of said main body, said overlapping section being free of said mounting tab and being adapted to be overlapped with a side of an adjoining second sheathing element so that said first edge portion of the sheathing element is located within the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the adjoining second sheathing element, and so that the overlapping section of the second end portion of the adjoining second sheathing element is located within said outerface channel of the sheathing element.

25. The sheathing element of claim 24, wherein said second edge portion is adapted such that a first edge portion of an adjoining third sheathing element can be engaged over at least one of said second edge portion of the sheathing element and the second edge portion of the adjoining second sheathing element.

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26. The sheathing element of claim 24, wherein said mounting tab includes a support batten extending in a longitudinal direction with respect to said main body, said support batten being formed as a channel.

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27. A method of sheathing an exterior of a structure using a plurality of the sheathing elements of claim 24, said method comprising:

positioning a first sheathing element on a support structure;

overlays a second sheathing element onto and adjacent to the first sheathing element so that a side of the second sheathing element overlaps an adjoining side of the first sheathing element;

engaging the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, respectively, by inserting a side section of the first edge portion of the first sheathing element into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the second sheathing element, and by inserting a side section of the second edge portion of the second sheathing element into the outerface channel of the second edge portion of the first sheathing element;

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positioning a third sheathing element adjacent to the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element so that the first edge portion of the third sheathing element is engaged over an overlapping section of the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element, whereat the second end portion of the first sheathing element engages the second end portion of the second sheathing element, by inserting the overlapping section into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the third sheathing element;

fixing the first sheathing element, the second sheathing element, and the third sheathing element to the support structure by using a mounting device to attach the mounting tab of each sheathing element to the support structure; and

repeating said positioning of the first sheathing element, said overlaying of the second sheathing element, said engaging of the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing

element, said positioning of the third sheathing element, and said fixing of the first sheathing element as necessary so as to sheath the support structure.

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28. An exterior sheathing element comprising:

a substantially planar main body having lateral sides;

a first edge portion on said main body between said lateral sides, said first edge portion including a longitudinal innerface channel;

a second edge portion on said main body between said lateral sides and opposite said first edge portion, said second edge portion including a longitudinal outerface channel; and

a mounting tab projecting from said second end portion so as to be substantially co-planar with respect to said main body; and

wherein one of said lateral sides of the sheathing element is adapted to be overlapped with a side of an adjoining second sheathing element so that a side portion of said first edge portion of the sheathing element is located within the innerface channel of the adjoining second sheathing element, and so that a side portion of the second edge portion of the adjoining second edge portion is located within said outerface channel of the sheathing element.

29. The sheathing element of claim 24, wherein said second edge portion is adapted such that a first edge portion of an adjoining third sheathing element can be engaged over at least one of said second edge portion of the sheathing element and the second edge portion of the adjoining second sheathing element.

30. The sheathing element of claim 28, wherein said mounting tab projects from only a section of said second end portion so as to form an overlapping section of said second end portion located near one of said lateral sides of said main body, wherein said overlapping section is free of said mounting tab.

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A 31. The sheathing element of claim ~~30~~²⁸, wherein said mounting tab includes a support batten extending in a longitudinal direction with respect to said main body, said support batten being formed as a channel.

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B 32. The sheathing element of claim ~~30~~²⁸, wherein said main body comprises sheet metal formed so as to have a wood grain outer texture, said main body having ribs extending substantially parallel to said lateral sides, said ribs being located adjacent to one of said lateral sides of said main body opposite said one of said lateral sides whereat said overlapping section is formed.

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C 33. The sheathing element of claim ~~32~~³¹, wherein said mounting tab includes a support batten extending in a longitudinal direction with respect to said main body, said support batten being formed as a channel.

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D 34. A method of sheathing an exterior of a structure using a plurality of the sheathing elements of claim ~~32~~³¹, said method comprising:

positioning a first sheathing element on a support structure;
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1. overlaying a second sheathing element onto and adjacent to the first sheathing element so that a side of the second sheathing element overlaps an adjoining side of the first sheathing element;
engaging the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, respectively, by inserting a side section of the first edge portion of the first sheathing element into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the second sheathing element, and by inserting a side section of the second edge portion of the second sheathing element into the outerface channel of the second edge portion of the first sheathing element;

positioning a third sheathing element adjacent to the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element so that the first edge portion of the third sheathing element is engaged over an overlapping section of the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element, whereat the second end portion of the first sheathing element engages the second end portion of the second

sheathing element, by inserting the overlapping section into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the third sheathing element;

fixing the first sheathing element, the second sheathing element, and the third sheathing element to the support structure by using a mounting device to attach the mounting tab of each sheathing element to the support structure; and

repeating said positioning of the first sheathing element, said overlaying of the second sheathing element, said engaging of the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, said positioning of the third sheathing element, and said fixing of the first sheathing element as necessary so as to sheath the support structure.

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35. The method of claim ¹³₂₄, wherein said overlaying of the second sheathing element comprises positioning the overlapping section of the second sheathing element over a side portion of the first sheathing element.

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36. The sheathing element of claim ¹³₂₈, wherein said mounting tab includes a support batten extending in a longitudinal direction with respect to said main body, said support batten being formed as a channel.

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37. A method of sheathing an exterior of a structure using a plurality of the sheathing elements of claim ¹³₂₈, said method comprising:

positioning a first sheathing element on a support structure;

overlaying a second sheathing element onto and adjacent to the first sheathing element so that a side of the second sheathing element overlaps an adjoining side of the first sheathing element;

engaging the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, respectively, by inserting a side section of the first edge portion of the first sheathing element into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the second sheathing element, and by inserting a side section of

the second edge portion of the second sheathing element into the outerface channel of the second edge portion of the first sheathing element;

positioning a third sheathing element adjacent to the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element so that the first edge portion of the third sheathing element is engaged over an overlapping section of the first sheathing element and the second sheathing element, whereat the second end portion of the first sheathing element engages the second end portion of the second sheathing element, by inserting the overlapping section into the innerface channel of the first edge portion of the third sheathing element;

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fixing the first sheathing element, the second sheathing element, and the third sheathing element to the support structure by using a mounting device to attach the mounting tab of each sheathing element to the support structure; and

repeating said positioning of the first sheathing element, said overlaying of the second sheathing element, said engaging of the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the second sheathing element with the first edge portion and the second edge portion of the first sheathing element, said positioning of the third sheathing element, and said fixing of the first sheathing element as necessary so as to sheath the support structure.

